

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

FACT SHEET

**APPROVE EXPENDITURES FOR THE EIGHTH ANNUAL
CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SPIRITUALITY
(ALL SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICTS)
(3 VOTES)**

SUBJECT

Request approval to host and conduct the Eighth Annual California Conference on Mental Health and Spirituality at the California Endowment Center for Healthy Communities.

REQUEST

1. Authorize the Department of Mental Health (DMH) to expend funds to host the 2009 California Conference on "Mental Health & Spirituality: The Journey to Wholeness," to be held on June 4 and June 5, 2009, at an estimated cost of \$42,500, fully funded by registration fees to be paid by participants and Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) one-time funds.
2. Authorize DMH to execute an agreement with the California Endowment Center for Healthy Communities for space and catering services for the conference at a total estimated cost of \$16,100.
3. Authorize DMH to purchase food and beverages for County employees, consumers, and family members attending the conference as an exception to Section 5.40.097, Incidental Expenses, of the Los Angeles County Code, which limits such purchases to \$500 per occurrence and \$5,000 annually.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION

These actions will permit DMH to host and conduct the Eighth Annual California Conference on "Mental Health and Spirituality: The Journey to Wholeness," to be held on June 4 and June 5, 2009, at the California Endowment Center for Healthy Communities. In support of the mental health system in Los Angeles County, the conference will host workshops that are aligned with the DMH MHSA plans and the DMH goals of promoting hope, wellness, and recovery.

The conference is required at this time because it will help the Department accomplish elements of its State-approved MHSA plans. A major mandate of the MHSA has been

to reach un served and underserved populations to support their recovery from mental illness. This conference provides an important opportunity to develop critical partnerships and learning that leverages the spiritual communities and spirituality, as a resource, to achieve that MHSA mandate. In addition, DMH is hosting the event for parties anticipated to attend from the seven counties surrounding Los Angeles County, including staff from county mental health departments. Accordingly, DMH's leadership in hosting this event is necessary to facilitate all parties' participation and will be instrumental to its success.

BACKGROUND

Since 2002, DMH has held an annual one-day educational event to make faith leaders aware of mental illness, its impact on families, and the supporting role faith communities can play in helping with recovery. By collaborating with faith leaders in underserved and un served communities, DMH is seeking to reduce barriers for people seeking mental health care.

Under the auspices of the California Institute for Mental Health, statewide efforts are underway to explore and support the role of spirituality as a resource for mental health consumers and families. As part of that effort, the educational forum is being expanded to a two-day conference to educate, train and empower mental health consumers, families, spiritual communities, and mental health providers to collaborate and help individuals and families struggling with mental illness.

Board approval of the recommended actions will enable DMH to execute agreements with the California Endowment Center for Healthy Communities to guarantee space, catering services, and other support for the conference and provide DMH with the necessary authority to expend funds in support of the conference.

CONTRACTING PROCESS

DMH solicited costs from three locations. The conference committee determined that the California Endowment Center for Healthy Communities was the preferred location based on availability, size of accommodations, cost, and transportation needs. As the caterer for the facility, and in accordance with the proposed agreement with the California Endowment Center for Healthy Communities, DMH will pay catering costs directly to Sodexo American for food and refreshments served during the conference.

In lieu of posting the opportunity on the County's web site, DMH solicited quotes from various venues that met selection requirements for the conference. In an effort to

reduce costs associated with this conference, DMH opted to use the California Endowment Center for Healthy Communities because the space is free to government entities who host health related meetings. In addition, catering services at the venue offered through Sodexo America LLC are less expensive than the other venues that were considered.

DMH Contact:

Robin Kay, Chief Deputy Director
(213) 738-4108
RKay@lacdmh.org

APPROVED BY:

DMH Program – Kumar Menon
DMH Contracts – Larry Quan
Chief Executive Officer – James Sokalski
County Counsel – Edward Yen

ds:SpiritualityConf_Apr09